

Park Adventures, Events & Activities January 2015



Santa Cruz District spreads from Half Moon Bay to the north, down south past Watsonville and inland to Saratoga. The area is rich with more than 25 California State Parks for you to explore and enjoy!

Wilder Ranch State Park

Located two miles north of Santa Cruz, on Highway 1 (831) 426-0505

Volunteering- A Great New Year's Resolution! Get Involved and Give Back at Wilder Ranch State Park

Sign-ups taking place now for training that begins Saturday, February 7 at 10am

Volunteers give heart and soul to "Life on the Ranch Days" and other activities that make Wilder Ranch State Park such a fun, interesting, hands-on place to visit. Once a year, the park puts out an annual call for new volunteers to join their crew of "ranch-hands," who bring the history of this early Santa Cruz dairy ranch to life. Training classes begin Saturday, February 7, at 10 am in the park's historic Meder Home.

After training, new volunteers give a minimum of 6 hours per month by hosting activity stations, leading nature walks, conducting tours of the grounds and buildings in the historic complex, and helping with events. To share your time to make these programs possible, please contact Barbara at Barbara.Cooksey@parks.ca.gov, or call the park at (831) 426-0505.

Wilder Ranch Tours and Living History Demonstrations Weekends from 11 am to 3 pm

Guided Tour of the Ranch Buildings Weekends at 1pm

Visit an early day dairy ranch and step back in time to the late 1800's at Wilder Ranch State Park. You can also play Victorian games or bring a picnic to enjoy on the front lawn, visit the farm animals and see what activities are taking place on the ranch this weekend; You may learn about hand quilting, watch blacksmithing, or wood stove baking techniques. Call (831) 426-0505 for more details.

History, Nature, and Scenic Views: A Tour of the Backcountry Saturday, January 10 at 9 am

This challenging guided three-hour hike will explore the natural and cultural history of the upper hills of Wilder Ranch State Park. Meet at the Wilder Ranch parking lot. Bring good walking shoes, lunch, snacks, and water. Hike cancelled if rain.

Wilder Ranch Coast Nature Walks

For energy efficient recreation –
California State Parks on the Internet: <<http://www.parks.ca.gov>>



Saturdays, January 3, 17, 24 and 31 at 11am

On these two-hour natural history excursions you will explore the plants, animals, and geology of the spectacular coastal bluffs. Meet at the Wilder Ranch Interpretive Center. Bring a snack, water, binoculars, and good walking shoes. Rain cancels.

Events made possible by California State Park Docents, California State Parks and Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks. Visit us on the web at www.thatsmypark.org or www.parks.ca.gov

Butano State Park

1500 Cloverdale Rd., Pescadero, CA 94060, (650) 879-2040
www.friendsofbutano.blogspot.com or facebook.com/ButanoStatePark

Wildflower Walk

Sunday, January 4, from 11am to 3pm

Walk along the trails of Butano State Park with Volunteer Naturalist Scott Peden. This is a slowly-paced walk with time to discover and identify plants, flowers and animals in the park, and allow for photography if you choose. Bring water, lunch or snacks, and plenty of questions. Meet Scott at the park's Visitor Center near the entrance station. Allow 3 to 4 hours for this walk.

Events made possible by California State Park Docents, California State Parks and Coastside State Parks Foundation. Visit us on the web at www.CoastsideStateParks.org and Facebook.com/CoastsideStateParks or www.parks.ca.gov

Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park

Located Off Hwy 9 in Felton (831) 335-7077

Basket Making Workshop: Learn how to make a basket with local pine needles!

Friday, January 9 from 2-4 pm and

Saturday, January 24 from 10am to Noon

Meet at the Visitor Center via the Parks main entrance off Hwy 9 in Felton.

Join Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park docent Cheryl VanDeVeer for a fun, free, family workshop learning how to make a basket from local pine needles. Meet at the Visitor Center. No experience necessary and all materials are supplied. Children should be accompanied by an adult. Program is free, parking fee \$10.

Old-Growth Redwood Walks

Every Saturday in January at 1 pm

Meet at the Visitor Center via the Park's main entrance off Hwy 9 in Felton.

Experience a guided forest adventure on a docent-led walk through the magnificent old-growth coast redwood forest. This .8 mile long stroll begins at 1pm and lasts about 1.5 hours. The trail is wheelchair and stroller accessible. Program is free, parking fee is \$10. More information is available at (831) 335-7077.

A Walk through the Sandhills

Thursday, January 8 from 11 am to 1 pm

This walk will lead you through the mysterious sandhill ecosystem that is a hidden gem within Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park. We will talk about the rare plants and animals that call this place home. Meet at the Juvenile Hall Parking Lot located off Graham Hill Road, where we will

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cross the road to access the trail. Dress in layers and bring water to drink. More information is available if you call (831) 335-7077.

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Natural Bridges State Beach

Located at the end of West Cliff Drive in Santa Cruz (831) 423-4609

Tours of the Monarch Grove -- October through January

Saturdays and Sundays at 11am and 2 pm

Join a Docent Naturalist for a tour of the state designated monarch butterfly preserve at Natural Bridges State Beach. Monarch butterflies are returning this fall to their winter home along our coast. Learn the story of this beautiful creature and its fascinating seasonal migration. Public tours are offered on weekends and no reservations are necessary, or you may call 423-4609 to arrange a tour for a group of 10 or more. Fall walks begin the 3rd weekend in October and continue through January or as long as monarchs are present: Monarch numbers vary, usually the highest numbers are visible in November/December. Meet at the Visitor Center for the hour-long program. The walk is wheelchair accessible.

Events made possible by California State Park Docents, California State Parks and Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks. Visit us on the web at www.thatsmypark.org or www.parks.ca.gov

Rancho del Oso Nature and History Center

Located 17 miles north of Santa Cruz, at 3600 Highway One, Davenport, California 95017
Open Weekends Noon to 4 pm. Call (831)427-2288.

Wildflower Hike

Saturday, January 10, 2015 at 10 am

This hike starts at the Rancho del Oso gate located along Highway 1, across from the Waddell Beach parking lot. Take your time among the wildflowers of Rancho del Oso's Waddell Valley. Docent and native plant specialist Scott Peden will lead a 4-mile hike to view a variety of wildflowers – there's always something in bloom! Photographers are easily accommodated. Join us for a portion or entire hike, bring lunch, water and energy to hike! Future dates: Saturday, February 14, 2015 at 10 am and Saturday, March 14, 2014 at 10 am.

Nature Wander

Sunday, January 11 at 1 pm

Find out what's growing and blooming right now in the Waddell Valley on this approximately 1 mile hike, 1.5 hour guided walk with docent naturalist Ann Garside. She will share information about the plants of Rancho del Oso as the group walks from coastal scrub through one of the last native stands of Monterey Pine left in the world. Show up with questions, curiosity and energy to walk and learn. Hike starts at the Rancho del Oso Nature and History Center. Additional Dates: February 8 and March 8 at 1pm.

Events made possible by California State Park Docents, California State Parks and Waddell Creek Association. Visit us on the web at www.ranchodeloso.org or www.facebook.com/RDOSP or www.parks.ca.gov

Santa Cruz Mission State Historic Park

Located on School St. off of Mission and Emmet Street in Santa Cruz (831) 425-5849

Mission Living History Programs--Saturdays from 1p.m. to 2p.m.

January 3 Candle Dipping

January 10 Hides and Tallow

January 17 Mission Cooking

January 24 Archaeology Demonstration

January 31 Wool Spinning and Weaving

Living history activities take place most Saturdays from 1:00pm to 2:00pm at the Santa Cruz Mission State Historic Park. Activities vary and may include mission cooking, mission building methods, working with leather and tallow, or early textiles: wool spinning & weaving. Each activity is aimed to give a feel for the way of life introduced to this area in the late 1700's to early 1800's as part of California's Mission Period.

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Big Basin Redwoods State Park

Located 9 miles outside of Boulder Creek on Hwy 236 (831) 338-8883

Coffee Talk and Crafts

Thursday, January 1 from 9:30-12:30

AND Saturday, January 10 from 9-12

AND Saturday, January 17 from 9-12

AND Saturday, January 24 from 9:30-12:30

Come to the Sempervirens Room next to Park Headquarters for free coffee or hot chocolate! This is a great way to start your day in Big Basin. A Big Basin Docent will be happy to answer your questions about the park and help get you going on the right trail. And there's a fun craft activity for the kids!

Shadowbrook Stroll

Thursday, January 1 at 10:30 am

AND Saturday, January 10 at 12 pm

Join Docent Hal Anjo as he guides you on a less-traveled trail that takes you by Union Creek, to the Sempervirens Falls and back through the redwoods. This is a four-mile, 3.5-hour hike. Bring water and good hiking shoes. Meet at Park Headquarters.

Discover Big Basin Redwoods!

Thursday, January 1 at 12 pm

AND Sunday, January 4 at 12 pm

AND Sunday, January 18 at 12 pm

AND Saturday, January 24 at 12 pm

Explore some of the park's less travelled backcountry with docent naturalist Barry Grimm. This hike will be individually tailored to your group—so distance can vary from 2 to 8 miles, depending on your needs. The pace is always moderate—with occasional short stops to discover the park's unique animals, plants and other natural features. Based on group size, experience level and weather conditions, we will choose from the many trails that explore the park's most scenic areas. Dress in layers for changeable weather and temperatures. Bring sturdy walking shoes, water and trail snacks. Heavy rain cancels. Meet at Park Headquarters.

Redwood Loop Walk

Thursday, January 1 at 1 pm

Friday, January 2 at 12 and 2 pm

Saturday, January 3 at 12 and 2 pm

Sunday, January 4 at 1 pm

Sunday, January 11 at 12 and 2 pm

Saturday, January 17 at 1 pm

Sunday, January 18 at 1 pm

Saturday, January 24 at 1 pm

Sunday, January 25 at 12 and 2 pm

Saturday, January 31 at 12 and 2 pm

How do these grand redwoods grow to be so old? So tall? How are they important to humans? Join us for this fun and informative guided half-mile stroll through a magnificent old-growth redwood forest. Meet the famous Mother Tree, the Father of the Forest and the incredible Chimney Tree on this 90-minute walk. Stroller and wheelchair accessible. Meet at Headquarters.

Hike to Ocean View Summit

Saturday, January 3 at 10 am

Escape the crowds on this 6-mile, 4.5-hour loop through shaded forest to a hilltop view of the coast. Join docent Steve Stolper as we climb the Meteor Trail through the trees, gaining 600 feet before emerging at Ocean View Summit. After a relaxed lunch we descend back into the forest and return to headquarters. Bring **at least** one liter of water, lunch, snacks, and appropriate clothing. This hike runs rain or shine. Meet at Park Headquarters.

Volunteer with the Trail Crew

Saturday, January 10 at 9 am (*must be 18 years of age or older*)

Since 1969 the Big Basin Volunteer Trail Crew has helped make it possible for others to safely enjoy the beauty of our park. The Trail Crew meets the second Saturday of each month, rain or shine. A typical workday lasts until mid-afternoon. Please bring your own work gloves, lunch and water. Join us for a unique perspective of Big Basin, a lively and productive experience with others who share a love of these redwood forests, and the satisfaction of participating in a vital part of the park's ability to educate and inspire the public! Meet at Park Headquarters. Check www.bigbasintrailcrew.org to confirm dates and time.

Berry Creek Falls Hike

Sunday, January 11 at 9:30 am

Travel deep into the heart of Big Basin as you experience a wide range of habitats on this moderate to strenuous 11-mile-loop hike. Wind through shady redwood canyons and climb dry ridges as you hike to the jewel of Big Basin—65-foot Berry Creek Falls. Bring lots of water,

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lunch and wear layers. Docent Bill Rhoades guides you on this seven-hour hike. Meet at Park Headquarters.

Winter Wildflower Walk!

Saturday, January 17 at 10 am

AND Sunday, January 18 at 10 am

Flowers in the winter? Fall rains bring a whole new blooming season upon us—many plants survived through the long, hot, dry summer just waiting for the cooler, wetter months to return and refresh them. Lichens, mosses and many chaparral plants just begin blooming this time of year! Join docent Scott Peden and learn to identify many of Big Basin's flowering plants. You'll also visit several historical spots within the park. Saturday's walk is a leisurely four-mile, four-hour amble that includes two chimney trees and a waterfall. Sunday's walk is a relaxed five-mile, five-hour amble that includes a chimney tree. Bring water and lunch. Meet at Park Headquarters.

Hike to Buzzard's Roost

Saturday, January 24 at 10 am

Develop your hiking muscles with this challenging 5-mile, 4-hour round trip to Buzzard's Roost. Join docent Steve Stolper for a hike to a dramatic rock formation with a commanding view of the park. We gain 1,200 feet in elevation on the way up. After a relaxed lunch on the rocks, we return to headquarters. Bring at least one liter of water, lunch, snacks, and appropriate clothing. Rain cancels. Meet at Park Headquarters.

Meteor Trail Hike

Sunday, January 25 at 11 am

Join docent Hal Anjo on one of our most diverse hikes—by mountain streams, oak woodlands, chaparral and redwoods. You'll discuss forests, flowers and fires on a six-mile, 3.5-hour hike. This somewhat strenuous ascent is rewarded with ocean views on a clear day. Bring water, lunch and good hiking shoes. Meet at Park Headquarters.

The Road Less Traveled—A Dog-Friendly Walk

Saturday, January 31 at 10 am

Sunday, February 1 at 11:30 am

On this dog-friendly walk, we travel on North Escape Road, a paved road closed to traffic. We tour stunning old-growth redwood groves along beautiful Opal Creek. We'll discuss redwood ecology and park history while exploring the deep shade of the redwood forest. This is a fun, easy, three-mile, two-hour roundtrip walk. Dogs not required, but welcome! Bring water and meet at Park Headquarters.

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